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# The Daily Record

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## THE BRITISH SUNDAY.

(By our London correspondent.)

One of the issues on which France and England have not been able to join hands so far, in spite and perhaps because of the Exhibition, is the question of Sunday. What does an English Sunday mean? Is it a hypocrisy? Is it a spiritual necessity? Is it a political convenience? The railway companies are issuing week-end tickets from Paris to London, but it is feared that the prospect of Sunday in London may be so entirely deterrent as to involve first the tourists and then the railway companies in disappointment. To be frank, Parisians who cannot afford to repeat the experiment of a visit to London at a more propitious time may find in a week-end only a modified pleasure. They would be coming, naturally, to see the Exhibition, and their national customs would lead them to expect that on Sunday, above all days, the Exhibition would open its gates to them. It has, however, been decreed, in accordance with the rules of the London County Council, that precisely on Sunday the Exhibition shall be closed. A lively correspondence has ensued in the English Press, of which the upshot might be that the pictures at least will be on view on Sundays, although the rest of the Exhibition will not. As is well known, the picture galleries are among the few distractions (to use a wicked word) open to the London public on Sunday, and then only in the afternoons. In addition, there are certain concerts, there are the public parks, there are a very few restaurants, and there are the public conveyances. The unfortunate Londoner, who is neither quite a Puritan nor quite a recluse and who has an instinct which tells him that the day of rest should, and could, be made pleasant without being made impious, finds the day a difficult portion in his calendar. If he has an army of friends, he spends Sunday in leaving cards on them, or perhaps he escapes with them into the country; if he has not, as often happens, a sufficient number to keep him ceaselessly engaged, he is openly and shamelessly bored.

Now the French, in common with many other nations, have frequently heard the English claims that England is a free country; but it was, we think, a Frenchman, and no less a Frenchman than Toequerille, who said that in the United States and in England there seems to be more liberty in the customs than in the laws of the people. In the great cities of the United States it is doubtless otherwise, but in England, and particularly in London, the remark is eminently suited to the Sunday Englishmen would like and that which they actually cultivate. It was custom, while England was still a puritanical country, that created the present Sunday; it was law that finally petrified it. Between the two it is held as in a vice, and Englishmen, claiming to be free, defend their Sunday on the plea of predilection. They tell us it is what they want, and the answer is unanswerable. But in this case the point is extraordinarily difficult, because it involves not only a question of morals but one of manners. The English public is beginning to ask itself whether the prospect of a barred and bolted Sunday is quite the warmest offer of hospitality it can extend to its visitors. It is clear that on a number of questions compromise is impossible. You cannot have regular trading on the Sunday without encountering what is, in truth, a fundamental objection in England; therefore you cannot open an Exhibition which is essentially commercial without touching that objection. But supposing the French visitors courteously waive the mention of any such sacrifice, they have still a

legitimate claim on London in the demand for amusements. Many excellent people, who are quite eager to go to church or chapel, would also be quite ready to share the day between devotion and enjoyment. In that direction some compromise should be possible. Theatres, if not music-halls, might be open. The censor would find a congenial task in deciding which plays might be played on Sundays and which might not; or the new arrangement would stimulate him in choosing for all days only such plays as would also not infringe the propriety of the Sunday. The Zoo, instead of being open only to privileged ticket-holders, might be open to the world at large. By public cricket-matches and other sports one might recognize openly the harmlessness of Sunday games, and thus give heart to the bold stockbrokers and others who play golf on Sundays. Seriously, the Puritan conception of Sunday is so discredited with the majority of the nation, although, as we believe, the meaning of the day is not obscured or its appeal weakened, that there can be only a gain in admitting the fact by removing unnecessary restraints on one's choice of action. A great city must in so many respects swerve from the strait and narrow path which is ideally proper that a few more outlets here and there, in addition to the few distractions already existing, can scarcely prove an immoral influence. On the contrary, it might well be maintained that outlets of some kind are a necessity in the promotion of good conduct. London is far from being puritanical in its life. On Sundays, as on other days, the largest city of the world displays temptations with an abundance proportioned to its size. Evils such as prevail in London in common with Paris or Chicago, Berlin or St. Petersburg, are not to be eradicated by a quiescence that is boring without becoming salutary to the large majority of people. This is an anomaly which cannot help striking Continental visitors, and which is probably at the root of much criticism. Unfortunately, it is only too likely that Parisians will see in the London Sunday a piece of vast hypocrisy, and will think London not morally better (for it is not) but infinitely duller than Paris.

## GENERAL NEWS.

### ENGLISH NEWS.

#### THE FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL VISIT.

The French armoured cruiser "Léon Gambetta," with President Fallières on board, arrived at Dover shortly after midday on Monday, heralded by salutes fired from the British warships. Upon disembarking at the pier M. Fallières was greeted by Prince Arthur of Connaught, and members of the Dover corporation, who presented him with an address expressing the desire for the continuance of friendship between the two peoples. Shortly after the President left for London, which was reached at 4.15 p. m. A brilliant assemblage was present at the railway station, including King Edward, the Prince of Wales, Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, the Dukes of Argyll and Fife, and several members of the Cabinet. Hearty greetings were exchanged when the President stepped from the train, and after a few minutes' conversation the company left the station in carriages for St. James' Palace, the "Marseillaise" and the English National Anthem being played by the band. The drive was made through streets lined with cheering spectators, including a large number of French visitors to the Exhibition, whose acclamations took the form of "Vive roi Edouard!" "Vive le Président!" Not to be outdone, the London

citizens replied with "Vive la France!" "Vive Fallières!"

Shortly after 5 p. m. President Fallières and M. Pichon left St. James' Palace, again saluted by the crowds in the streets, and proceeded to Buckingham Palace. Here they were conducted in ceremony to King Edward, who introduced the visitors to the Queen and Princess Victoria, after which tea was served. The President and M. Pichon later paid a visit to the Prince and Princess of Wales at Marlborough House, whence they returned to St. James' Palace.

A State banquet took place at Buckingham Palace on Monday evening in honour of President Fallières, who occupied a seat between King Edward and Queen Alexandra. His Majesty, speaking in French, welcomed M. Fallières in the name of the Queen and of himself, and expressed the desire that from this, his first visit to England, the President should carry away with him the most agreeable impressions. Referring to the Franco-British Exhibition the King said that it was the outcome of the *entente cordiale* between the two nations, and that he wished to see the *entente* continue in the interest of the happiness and welfare of France and Great Britain and for the maintenance of peace. He raised his glass to the health of the President and the prosperity of France. M. Fallières, replying to the toast, returned thanks for the brilliant reception accorded him. France, he said, considered these visits exchanged between the high representatives of both nations as a confirmation of the cordial understanding, an understanding which he was convinced would continue to develop in the future and exercise its beneficent influence upon the prosperity of the two countries and the peace of the world. He drank to the health of King Edward and the Royal family, and to the growth of friendship between Great Britain and France.

The English Press is unanimous in extending a hearty welcome to President Fallières, and the following extract from an article in the *Daily Graphic* may be regarded as typical. "The *entente*," says that journal, "has helped to heal the wounds caused by the recently ended conflict between Russia and Japan; it has removed the long and bitter rivalry of England and Russia in Asia; it has almost resulted in the reestablishment of the old friendship between the Wilhelm Strasse and Downing Street; and it has rendered possible friendly intercourse between Berlin and Paris, such as existed not since the Jules Ferry administration. After five years of hard and devoted work it is no mere phrase, but literal truth when it is said: *l'entente, c'est la paix.*"

#### THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. Bowerman (Lab., Deptford), after stating that the Armour Company and other firms forming the American Beef Trust had acquired some stalls in the Smithfield Market with the object of selling by retail American meat only, asked the Government if it would not be advisable, in order to oppose the extension of the Meat Trust, to consider the question of suspending the regulations which limit the importation of live cattle from the Continent and other countries for immediate slaughter.

The President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Winston Churchill, in a written answer, said: "I have communicated with the Armour Company and am informed that they are not concerned in any such plan as is referred to in the question. I learn that the Board of Agriculture does not propose to alter the existing regulations for the importation of live cattle." (Continued on page 2.)